

## **Procedure for good management of situations involving staff members in connection with a report of suspected research misconduct/deviation from good research practice**

### **Background**

The credibility of science is based on research being conducted in an honest manner in accordance with good research practice. It is perhaps particularly important in the medical sciences, as people risk being injured if research is based on false evidence. Therefore, all suspicions of misconduct or deviations from good research practice are to be investigated.

Such investigations are often complicated and time-consuming processes that may affect the work environment of the person reported, the person who filed the report and colleagues in their surroundings. It is of the utmost importance that management of the situation is as good as possible with provision of appropriate support during and after an investigation process.

The employer has principal responsibility for the work environment, while the employer and staff members are to cooperate to create a good work environment. Within the University there is zero tolerance towards victimisation, harassment and sexual harassment.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the procedure is to ensure good management of the situation and a good work environment for staff members in connection with the reporting of suspected research misconduct/deviations from good research practice.

### **Target group**

The procedure is for managers and staff members at the Faculty for Medicine.

### **The procedure**

The procedure below is to be followed in the case of every report of suspected research misconduct/deviation from good research practice. The employer is to act promptly and continuously document initiated contacts and events.

### Initial meeting

- The line manager/s call and lead a joint meeting with the person reported and the person who filed the report. Both are informed that a union representative, if applicable, or other person acting as support can take part in the meeting. The specific situation is to determine if initial conversations are to be conducted separately with the person reported and the person who filed the report.

If the line manager is not a head of department, the head of department is also to be called to the meeting. If the person reported or the person who filed the report is a doctoral student, the assistant head of department with responsibility for third-cycle studies is to be called to the meeting. If the report involves more than one department, a faculty management representative is to be given the opportunity to participate, due to a possible need to coordinate actions.

- Local HR/work environment coordinators and health and safety representatives are to be informed, and, if required, take part in the meeting
- During the meeting, the following points are to be covered:
  - The options for the person reported and the person who filed the report to receive extra personal support from the Occupational Health Service or equivalent, as well as support from the faculty's research representative or staff support group
  - Risks in the work environment for the person reported, the person who filed the report and colleagues in their surroundings, e.g. concerning relations, group affiliation, supervision, localisation
  - The University's zero tolerance towards victimisation, harassment, threats and violence, and prohibition of reprisals
  - Observance of discretion for the protection of the person reported and the person who filed the report
  - The need for a communication plan (e.g. aims, target groups, message and channel) and support from a communications officer
  - Clarification that the investigation and processing of suspected misconduct is completely separate from the employer's measures regarding the work environment
  - Continued planning with follow ups

Risks identified during the meeting are to be documented along with measures in the University's template for risk and impact assessment.

### Information to Region Skåne

- If the person reported or the person who filed the report works within Region Skåne, the line manager is to inform the line manager of the person

in question at Region Skåne, as well as Region Skåne's head of research, that a report has been filed with an aim to monitor the work environment.

#### During the investigation

- The line manager/s continuously monitor the work environment and health of the person reported, the person who filed the report and the surroundings, among other things by follow ups in accordance with the agreed risk and impact assessment.
- If there are signs of ill-health, victimisation or harassment, the line manager is to act in accordance with the University's procedures.

#### After the investigation

- Regardless of the outcome of the investigation the employer has a continued responsibility for the work environment and health of the person reported and the person who filed the report. The line manager/s are to be particularly alert for any work environment consequences for the person reported, the person who filed the report and the surroundings.
- The line manager/s appoint a meeting with the person reported and the person who filed the report, as well as others who took part in the initial meeting, with an aim to discuss the above. The specific situation is to determine if conversations are to be conducted separately with the person reported and the person who filed the report.
- The investigation's effect may also be such that special work environment actions may be justified at the workplace.

#### **Evaluation of procedure and revision**

The procedure is to be evaluated after being applied and to be revised, if required.

#### **Drafting**

The following people have taken part in the drafting of this procedure for good management of situations involving staff members in connection with a report of suspected research misconduct/deviation from good research practice: the dean, vice-dean responsible for employeeship and ethics, department heads, head of HR, the faculty's staff coordinator and work environment coordinator for organisational and social work environment, principal health and safety representatives at the Faculty of Medicine, employee organisations at Lund University, the doctoral student representative, the Medical Doctoral Student Council and Region Skåne.

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